

to a million and more. Backed with funds and moral encouragement this organization could be utilized to make an outstanding demonstration of public and private cooperation.

I believe that it is possible to formulate permissive legislation which will not in effect junk the sound beginnings that have been made. It can be peculiarly Western in its form, rather than cut on any New Deal or European compulsory pattern; and it can put California in the lead in showing that the medical care problem can be dealt with on a *quality* service basis.

The red herring of "doctor's monopoly" will be dragged out, but the fallacy of this is easy to answer. In connection with medical practice the only element of monopoly is the State's own requirement of an examination for a license to practice medicine and surgery. This is a safeguard against malpractice and inadequate educational preparation. In the CPS program every physician must be able to obtain malpractice insurance and meet the State requirements in education. I believe that this is important in order to keep the great traditions and ideals of the medical profession at work instead of distorting them into obstacles to progress. We need evolution of the best, rather than revolution. I hope that one of the outstanding achievements of your administration will be a program of health which will set an example for other states.

I regret that the "bump" I had last year makes it impossible for me to take on a full working program, but if I can be helpful in an advisory way I would be glad to have you call on me.

Faithfully,

RAY LYMAN WILBUR

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Office of the Chancellor

March 22, 1945.

My dear Governor Warren:

Following our conversation over the telephone a few days ago I have been reviewing the whole subject of prepaid medical care to see whether we could get out of the present legislative snarl which seems to be developing more heat than light. I am still hopeful that some positive accomplishments may come about at this session of the legislature.

As you realize, this is one of the most difficult of social and governmental problems, since everyone is involved to some degree. I am more than ever convinced that compulsion of the physician and of the family is not the answer. This compulsion will be applied to too many unwilling people to have it work well. We have made too many important gains in the United States, and particularly in California, on a voluntary basis to substitute for them expensive theoretically-planned schemes, no matter how beneficent they may seem.

You may feel that I am anchored in the past and unwilling to go along with change; but the fact is that there has been no change in the fundamentals of science applied to the care of the sick and the prevention of disease. These fundamentals depend upon research, experience, and long and expert training. We must have experts in this field who can be abreast of the advances of science and who know their business. They can be understood only by those who know the possibilities of modern medicine. No political group or board, no vested interest, no governmental unit, no matter how large or how well financed, can be trusted to make wise, lasting and forward-looking decisions in this human activity which requires the tests and the judgment of the experts. Social theories that will push us backward, rather than forward, in the fight for better health are always a menace. I have worked too long and too intensively for improving the standards of medical education and medical care to be complacent about seeing them dumped on the scrap heap. Arguments that are advanced about what has happened in Russia, England, or Germany, or Holland fall short of the mark. I have seen something of all of these except those of Russia. Not one of those countries has ever attained for like numbers of people the quality or quantity of medical care that we take for granted. Their public health organizations function differently. Their standards of what constitutes adequate medical care do not measure up to ours.

I have a firm faith that the voluntary method has worked better in this country than any compulsory scheme could possibly have done. I believe that it will work better in the future if we put more steam behind it. As I indicated in my previous letter to you, under date of February 9th, we have a number of voluntary plans. All

of them are based on somewhat limited service, but service of excellent quality. In the California Physicians' Service our State has a unique and significant voluntary plan with which to work, a plan that has struggled through the vicissitudes of youth and has gained experience. Admittedly, the California Physicians' Service is not perfect and has not always functioned as smoothly as we should like, but through experimentation, through trial and error, we have learned more about practical working procedures under American conditions than has any other such non-profit organization. Certainly it would seem wiser to foster the development of such an organization, to utilize its experience and to help in the extension of its usefulness, than to discard it and other voluntary procedures for a heavily financed theoretical setup that has never been tested and that has never worked adequately anywhere. When several thousand forward-looking physicians of the State have accepted responsibility for a social experiment as important as this, it should not be destroyed and the experience gained by it discarded.

May I ask for a reconsideration of this whole problem to see whether you will not discover that it would be wiser to help the physicians carry on the difficult and complicated task for which they alone can provide the expert physicians and surgeons. This is not a question of economics alone. It is not 3% of so many pay-rolls divided among so many doctors. It involves quality in medical care, in medical education which is expensive, and in medical research. It must include hospitals, clinics, laboratories, and all of the appurtenances of modern medical practice and the personnel required for them.

I was much pleased when you took hold of this subject, since it happens that I have been working on this difficult problem for a long time and with many people who have been seeking a solution. I should like to see California in the vanguard. I believe that we can make a demonstration through the California Physicians' Service that will be valuable to every other state in the Union. I think that there is no need to destroy any existing medical center of quality or any other voluntary procedure by which a group of physicians, trained in accordance with the laws of the State, can organize to take care of groups of citizens who need their care on a prepaid basis with voluntary choices of physi-

cians and hospitals. There is no substitute in the protection of the people for high quality of preparation and training. The doctor is an individual. Each patient is an individual. No two individuals are born alike or trained alike, and any nickel in the slot or capitation method of medical care is bound to be costly, controlled by ignorance, and full of peril.

The California Physicians' Service is planning to have a meeting in Sacramento on April 7th. If there are any questions which you would like to discuss with us at that time I would be glad to arrange to save some time for you on our agenda. I am sending a copy of this letter to our CPS Board of Directors.

Very sincerely,

RAY LYMAN WILBUR

Governor Earl Warren,
Sacramento, California.

✓ ✓ ✓

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Earl Warren
Governor

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Sacramento

April 3, 1945.

The Honorable Ray Lyman Wilbur
Chancellor, Stanford University
Palo Alto, California.

My dear Doctor:

I received your letter of March 22nd concerning the health insurance bill, but unfortunately only after it had been released to the press by the California Medical Association's publicity agent as propaganda against the bill. I was therefore compelled by circumstances—but I assure you, against my desires—to discuss it with the press.

This whole situation has developed an attitude of bitterness on the part of many doctors that is incomprehensible to me. The health bill has been referred to as State Medicine, Socialized Medicine, an alien philosophy born in Germany, and numerous other epithets that come with bad grace from the California Medical Association, which sponsored a similar bill in our State Legislature only ten years ago.